

Newsletter May 2025

Clementine Dushimimana is the new Mothers' Union worker for **Shyogwe Diocese in Rwanda**. She sends warm greetings to you all and a report of their activities for the last year. You will have read her letter in the April Issue. Over the next few issues of the newsletter there will be more information about their achievements.

REPORT FROM SHYOGWE

Mary Samuna Day is celebrated alongside the increasing membership of the Mothers' and Fathers' unions in various parishes. Mothers' Union, Fathers' Union, have been formed at the diocesan, archdeaconry, and parish levels.



Seminar for married couples focused on domestic violence prevention.



A REFLECTION

Philip Baker (24th April 2025)

Easter is now in our rear-view mirror; we have been through the extreme range of emotions from the agony of the crucifixion to the ecstasy of the resurrection, but is it in fact now over? Of course it isn't, rather it is the start!

The original Apostles had to come to terms with the events of that first Easter. Understandably they took time to realise the enormity of what they had just been part of and lived through, Jesus had died on the Cross and risen again to life, in fulfilment of the Scriptures and to give mankind the opportunity of turning to God and having heavenly life after earthly death. I cannot imagine the effort that understanding this must have taken. And then the realisation of what this meant for them. This is where we are in that process – coming to terms with the implications of what it means to be a follower of Christ. At Baptism services there is this question: “Do you renounce evil and turn to Christ?” – that is what we have to ask ourselves now.

Fifty days after Easter we come to Pentecost, which is when the Apostles and their followers were gathered together and the Spirit of the Lord came down and filled them. This gave them the strength to go out and preach the gospels to everyone who would listen. In a sense it marked the beginning of the church, when it grew from a band of followers to a movement. Those Apostles have long ago joined with God, and others have taken up their work. This process of passing the job on to successive generations has been going on ever since then, and we are in a direct line of descent from that time. It is now our turn and when we have done what we can those we have enthused will continue it on.

This Easter season let us reflect on that continuum and rejoice in our part in it. Let us be filled by the Holy Spirit and be enthused to do our part for the growth of our Faith. Let us see ourselves as part of God's earthly Kingdom that has been at work for the past two thousand years.

MOTHERS' UNION GARDEN PARTY

Bishop's Garden, Ely. Saturday 14th June. 3-5pm.

Music from the King's School will entertain us.

Bring your own packed tea. Fizz and soft drinks provided.

Raffle prizes will be gratefully received and there will also be an opportunity to buy MU cards and see a display about our worldwide links.

Everyone welcome

150th celebration.

Put your thinking hats on and think of what we can do to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Mothers' Union. Ideas for things to do as a diocese as well as within branches and deaneries. It seems like a long way away but celebrations need to be taking place by the end of summer 2026. Contact me at the details below so that we can get the ball rolling. *Hazel*

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Diocesan minutes from our Spring meeting and AGM will be sent out with the Newsletter but I have included below notes from the excellent illustrated talk from MAF by Nick Keen. If you, friends or church members have any picture postcards (either new or used) please pass to Jean Webb. They will be given to MAF for their fundraising.



Nick explained that **Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF)** is a Christian airline mission – the largest humanitarian airline in the world. It has been running for 80 years having started just after the war with the purpose “to fly for life” to isolated (both spiritually and physically) places, preaching and saving. There is the Christian Vet Mission in Africa, also evangelising. He spoke of flying a pastor across Madagascar to minister in a prison. Aircraft are flying every 6 minutes to build communities, bring the gospel, and support the local church by bringing the love of Jesus. They are reaching the most isolated people in the most remote corners of the world. They work in many countries, some of which cannot be named due to security risks. They have flown representatives from 1500 charities, responding to disasters, bringing medicines and supporting community development and training.

There are 1350 people working for MAF throughout the world, as pilots, booking agents, radio operators, mechanical and electrical engineers. Only 2% of workers actually fly, the rest are important to keep it operating. The light aircraft carry 4- 13 people depending on size of plane and operate to the same standards as any aircraft. They have to be used to rough runways. There are 1,000 destinations in 24 countries transporting 125,000 passengers around the world, travelling 6.1 million km. Roads in many places are impassable in the wet season and so MAF enables people to get on with their work. They are able to fly people in quickly to deal with medical situations, and in some places medical staff give up a week's holiday to run eye clinics in remote areas. 295 eye surgeries were performed in a 5-day clinic in Kenya. Pilots are not medics but may often get involved with administration. Children are flown to and from school at the beginning and end of term. In supporting development work, an agronomist may be flown in to an area to teach better crop growing. Surplus crops are taken by plane to be sold elsewhere. When building schools in remote areas all materials have to be flown in. 3.1 million people have been displaced by the war in Sudan. MAF has flown in cargo and medicines, on 33 flights, 200 passengers and 26 tons of cargo to transit camps for refugees. Bible translators are also carried. In Angola, the Halo Trust has removed 100,000 of the 10 million landmines and MAF rescued 1,000 refugees after terror attacks in Mozambique. MAF works with cut off communities in jungles, mountains, deserts, swamps as well as conflict and disaster zones. It overcomes formidable barriers for those trapped in isolation and poverty. Communications are improving with mobile phones. On return engineers have to clean the dust out of engines. Aircraft are used for ambulance work, tool boxes, school transport, food delivery and disaster relief. He asked members to pray for MAF, volunteer or donate either by legacies or collecting postcards which can be sold to raise money. It costs £60 - £70 million to run the charity. They do not charge for services but ask for a contribution later. They bring help, hope and healing to communities. Pilots give a percentage of their income to support the work and are all Christians, praying before take-off. MAF is working with younger people in order to recruit volunteers.

ANNUAL MEETING and DISPLAYS for FAITH IN ACTION and WORLDWIDE



COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEO. Debbie Tye

We have a new YouTube video link to share with you for **APRIL THURSDAY PRAYER**:

“Celebrating the Light of the World”. Led by Philip Baker.

As we lost our zoom connection in the Cathedral, we have produced this video slightly differently.

Sue Claydon was able to record the prayers and reading from her link. We recorded Philip’s talk separately in the Cathedral – then joined it together! You may find that you will have to turn up the volume a bit during Philip’s talk – then turn it down for the song.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zl-qwofrOsg>

BANNER HOLDER.

We think this Banner Holder was left behind at our Commissioning Service.

Does anyone recognise it? If so, please get in contact with Debbie to arrange collection: MUElyDiocese@hotmail.com



**Thursday Prayer in Ely Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am on
15th May**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85209298628?pwd=VDTrciGq12BVz8luyEa34M6BRLZDIK.1>

Meeting ID: 852 0929 8628 Passcode 080127



Jean delivering knitted items to Alison at Hinchingsbrooke

When I recently took a batch of lovely knitting to Hinchingsbrooke, I met Alison who works on the dementia ward. I heard that the brightly coloured lap blankets, which were requested for a trial to prevent falls, have also been very popular in helping patients recognise their bed by the blanket draped over it.

So please keep knitting bright colours, and different patterns and designs.

Just a reminder that fluffy yarns are not suitable, but odd squares of soft texture yarn that won't pull out certainly are.

Many thanks for keeping me busy sewing MU name tapes on them! *Jean Webb*



THY KINGDOM COME: 29th May – 8th June.

This year, Thy Kingdom Come celebrates its tenth anniversary. For ten years we have been praying Thy Kingdom Come. In particular, each year, we have been praying for five people we know, that they may come to know the love of God for themselves. Once again, Mothers' Union are asking members to 'Pray for Five, Invite One.' So as well as an encouragement to pray, we are using this as an opportunity to invite one individual each to a Mothers' Union event.

This call echoes our triennium theme of "Join Us, Join In!" This year, as we continue in this pilgrimage of prayer, we focus on the prayer that Jesus taught us: the prayer that teaches us how to pray and live, the prayer that contains this amazing hope, Thy Kingdom Come!
<https://www.mothersunion.org/ThyKingdomCome>

More MU Resources are also available here:

<https://www.mothersunion.org/news/heres-how-you-can-get-involved-with-thy-kingdom-come>

This includes an Interactive Prayer Station leaflet and other ideas. The theme for May Midday Prayer will focus on "Thy Kingdom Come".

There's more info on the Thy Kingdom Come website: <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

Particularly useful is the Novena Booklet and Prayer Journal, this year focussing on The Lord's Prayer, with 10 days of reflections, written by Archbishop Stephen Cottrell.

Thursday Lunchtime Concerts, Ely Cathedral at 1.10pm.

If you are coming to any of our Thursday Prayer Services, there are some Lunchtime Concerts this term which coincide with our dates:

19 June - Jane Faulkner (violin) and 17 July - Julian Hellaby (piano)

The Concert Series runs from 22 May to 24 July, and a full list can be found on the Cathedral website:
<https://www.elycathedral.org/music/concerts-and-recitals/lunchtime-concerts>

Threads through the Bible Exhibition, Ely Cathedral.

Running from Friday 9 May - Sunday 29 June.

“Threads through the Bible” is an astonishing, inspiring exhibition of textile art. With spectacular designs, brilliant colours and extraordinary stitching, you’re taken through a journey from the first pages to the last pages of the Bible. Artist Jacqui Parkinson has been fascinated by the Bible and its stories for fifty years.

She says: “My aim is to capture the wonderful extravagance and drama of three key parts of the Bible – creation, the life of Jesus, and the end times – and to delight people who view it. It’s a story of love and promise, tragedy and triumph, and ultimate hope that we can all do with these days.”

If you saw any of the other exhibitions in this series, this will be well worth a visit if you are coming to Ely.

Full details available here: <https://www.elycathedral.org/events/threads-through-the-bible-exhibition>

Saturday 27th September 2025. **Canterbury Provincial Gathering** is at The King’s Centre, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0ES. **Tickets** £20 per person and are available at www.ticketsource.co.uk/mothers-union

Join Us, Join In is the theme. The event is open to all members and your friends too.

AGENDA

10am Venue open, tea & coffee provided

10.30am Gathering opens with Welcome and Worship

Morning includes:

Introduction by PP Comfort Fearon

Presentations by 2 Clusters

Dorcas Dress Project

12 Midday Service with Communion led by

The Rt Revd Stephen Croft, Bishop of Oxford

1 – 2.30pm LUNCH (please bring your own)

Tea & Coffee provided

2.30pm Afternoon includes:

Words from WWP Kathleen Snow

Parababble Puppet Ministry

Presentations by 2 Clusters

MU Across the World by

The Rt Revd Dr Jo Bailey Wells,

Bishop of Episcopal Ministry

4.30/4.45pm Close with prayers and the Grace

5 - 5.30pm End of our day

150th celebrations - reminder of key dates:

- 10th June 2026, a celebratory service at St Paul’s at 7pm is the official 150th service for Mothers’ Union
- 11th June 2026, 150th year Annual Gathering at the Emmanuel Centre, next to Mary Sumner House.
- **Early October 2026** for the Mothers’ Union **150th Anniversary Global Gathering in Durban, South Africa**. Learn, inspire, and connect with members worldwide. Shape the future of Mothers’ Union with fresh insights and be part of something truly transformational. Ticket price for Gathering only £95. **ESTIMATED** costs including Return Flights, Accommodation (5 nights), Airport Transfers, Breakfast and Evening Meals **£1,500 - £1,700 per person**. Please contact Hazel if you are interested.